

Claims 5, 10, and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mealey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,737), Argade et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,724,505), and further in view of Zumkehr et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,247,118 B1). Claim 5 depends upon claim 1, which is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicant also believes claim 5 to be in condition for allowance. Independent claim 10 has been amended. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10, as amended, defines over the references of record. Applicant further submits that dependent claims 14-16 also define over the references of record. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 10 and 14-16 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 6-9 and 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mealey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,737), in view of Edgington et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,530,804) and further in view of Zumkehr et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,247,118 B1). Independent claims 6 and 20 have been amended. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims, as amended, define over the references of record. Applicant further submits that dependent claims 7-9, 21, and 22 also define over the references of record. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 6-9 and 20-22 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mealey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,737) in view of Edgington et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,530,804) and further in view of Zumkehr et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,247,118 B1). As discussed above, independent claim 10 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 11-13 depend upon claim 10 and are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mealey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,737) and further in view of Zumkehr et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,247,118 B1). Claim 23 has been amended. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 now defines over the references of record, and is in condition for allowance.

Reservation of Rights

Applicant does not admit that references cited under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a), 102(e), 103/102(a), or 103/102(e) are prior art, and reserves the right to swear behind them at a later date.

Arguments presented to distinguish such references should not be construed as admissions that the references are prior art.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney (612) 371-2159 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 8 day of October, 2002.

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Name

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Signature